# Enhancing School Safety & Security: Understanding Reporting Systems & Anonymized Threats to Protect K-12 Communities

## Vermont 2024 Governor's Annual School Safety Conference

**September 2024**

Don Hough, Program Specialist | CISA School Safety Task Force
Ethan Walton, Program Specialist | CISA School Safety Task Force

# Agenda

- Organizational Overview
- K-12 Risks & Threat Environment
- School Safety Best Practices
- Improving School Physical Security
- Encouraging Bystander Reporting
- Anonymized Threat Response Guidance
- SchoolSafety.gov Tools & Resources

# Our School Safety Perspective

## Overview

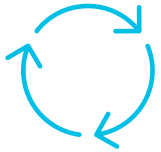
The CISA School Safety Task Force (SSTF) was established to support the federal government's efforts in strengthening the safety and security of kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) schools across the country. SSTF's work centers around building the capacity of K-12 school safety community and administering the Federal School Safety Clearinghouse and SchoolSafety.gov.

## School Safety Issue Areas

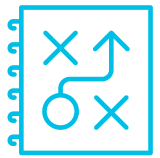
- Bullying and Cyberbullying
- Child Exploitation
- Cybersecurity
- Emergency Planning
- Infectious Disease & Public Health
- Mental Health
- Physical Security
- School Climate
- Targeted Violence
- Threat Assessment & Reporting

## Mission

SSTF enhances the safety and security of schools by:



Fostering change through outreach, engagement, and educational campaigns



Facilitating action by creating, coordinating, and disseminating resources, products, and tools to support schools in implementing and strengthening their physical security postures

Equipping stakeholders with training and expertise to apply recognized best practices in the context of their specific communities, venues, and schools

# Opt-in & Interact Today

Option 1:
**Scan**

Scan the **QR Code**

Option 2:
**Web**

Visit **menti.com** and
enter code: 9868 5724

# What best describes your role?

A District Administrator (e.g. Superintendent)

B School Administrator (e.g. Principal)

C School Board Member

D School Staff (e.g. Teacher)

E School Based Law Enforcement

F State Level Education Organization

G Emergency Planner / Manager

H School Safety Organization Rep

I Parent

J Student

K Other

Visit
**menti.com**

Enter the Code:
**9868 5724**

Or
Scan QR Code

# K-12 School Safety Risk & Threat Environment Trends

# Current Trends within the K-12 Environment

**School Violence**

67% of public schools reported having at least one violent incident, and 59% reported having at least one nonviolent incident.[1]

**Cybersecurity Threats**

There has been a total of 1,331 publicly disclosed school cyber incidents affecting U.S. school districts across a wide of incidents from 2016-2022.[2]

**Hoax Calls & Swatting**

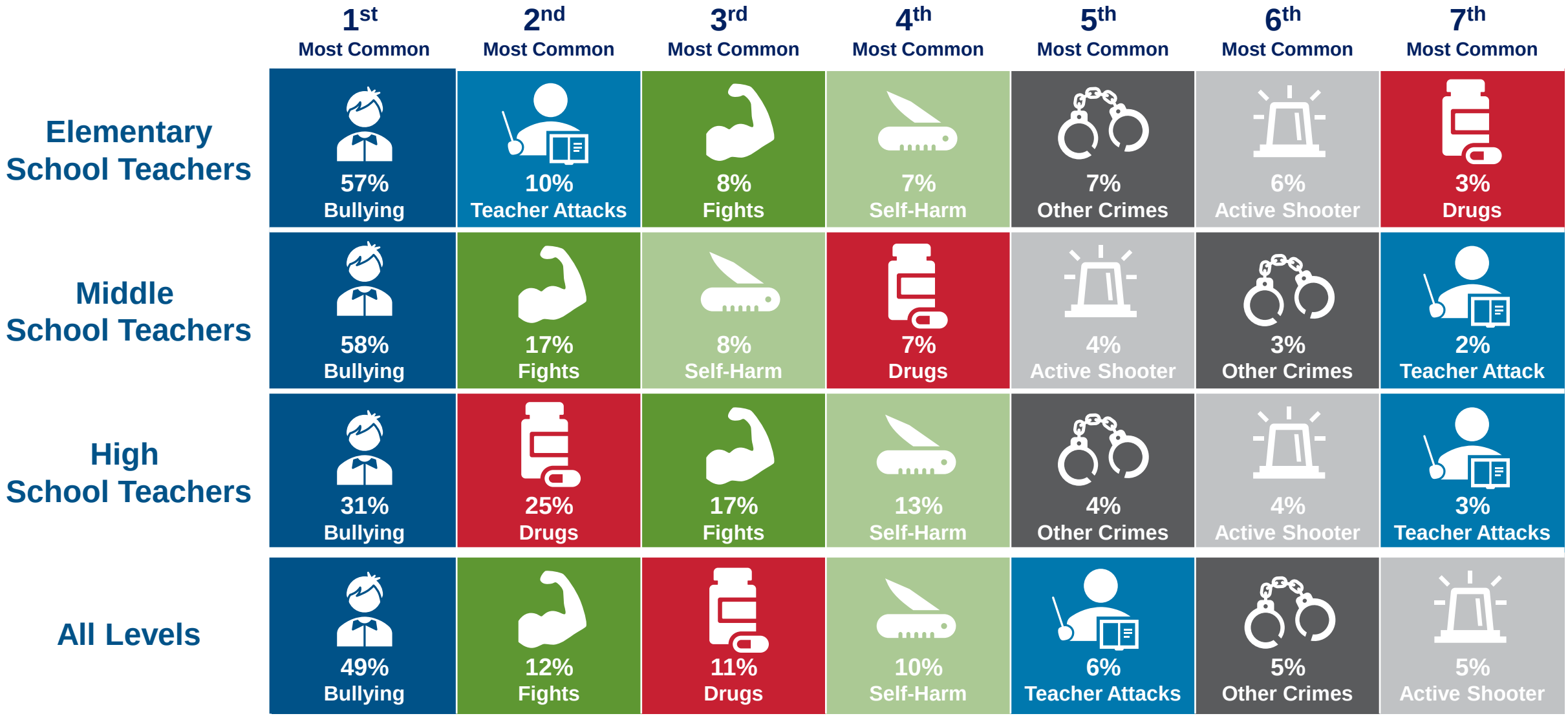
In the 2022-2023 school year, 63% of all violent incidents were false reports of an active shooter within the school (i.e., Swatting).[3]

**Mental Health**

In 2021, more than 42% of students felt persistently sad or hopeless and 29% experienced poor mental health.[4]

Sources:
[1] DoE National Center of Educational Statistics, 2024. [2] K12 Security Information Exchange (K12 SIX), 2022.
[3] Educator's School Safety Network, 2022. [4] Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022.

# What Teachers Are Saying…




Source: Teachers' Views on School Safety: Consensus on Many Security Measures, But Stark Division About Arming Teachers | RAND

# School Safety Best Practices

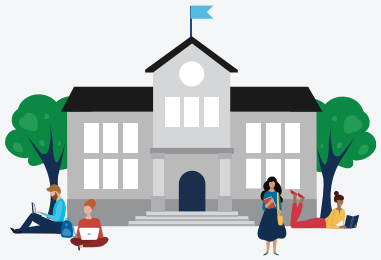
Best Practices, Guidance, and Tools to Create Safe School Environments

## Supporting Student Mental Health

Supporting students who are experiencing mental health challenges, schools can help foster a sense of safety and promote better academic and behavioral outcomes.

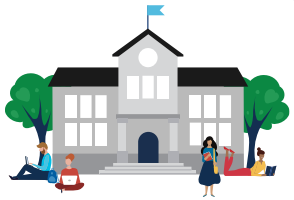
## Preventing Bullying

Bullying and cyberbullying threaten students' physical and emotional safety and can impact their social and academic success at school.



## Implementing Security Measures

Improving schools' physical security and involving school personnel who are trained to prevent, recognize, and respond to threats of violence.



# HOLISTIC SAFETY

## Strengthening Cybersecurity

Growing dependence on technology systems - coupled with emerging, evolving, and increasingly deceptive cyber threats – demands enhanced awareness and vigilance when it comes to our online world.

## Intervening with Support Early

Reporting, and addressing concerning behaviors can help stop violence before it occurs.

## Improving School Climate

Developing students with strong character who are connected to their peers, educators, and communities in meaningful ways can improve school climate and prevent violence from occurring.

## Planning and Practicing for Emergencies

Training prepares students, teachers, staff, parents, and community partners for the actions to take before, during, and after safety incidents.

# What safety topics are most relevant to your school?

- **A** Bullying & Cyberbullying
- **B** Child Exploitation
- **C** Cybersecurity
- **D** Emergency Planning
- **E** Infectious Diseases & Public Health
- **F** Mental Health
- **G** School Climate
- **H** Targeted Violence
- **I** Threat Assessment & Reporting

Visit
**mentl.com**

Enter the Code:
**9868 5724**

Or
Scan QR Code

# Emergency Planning

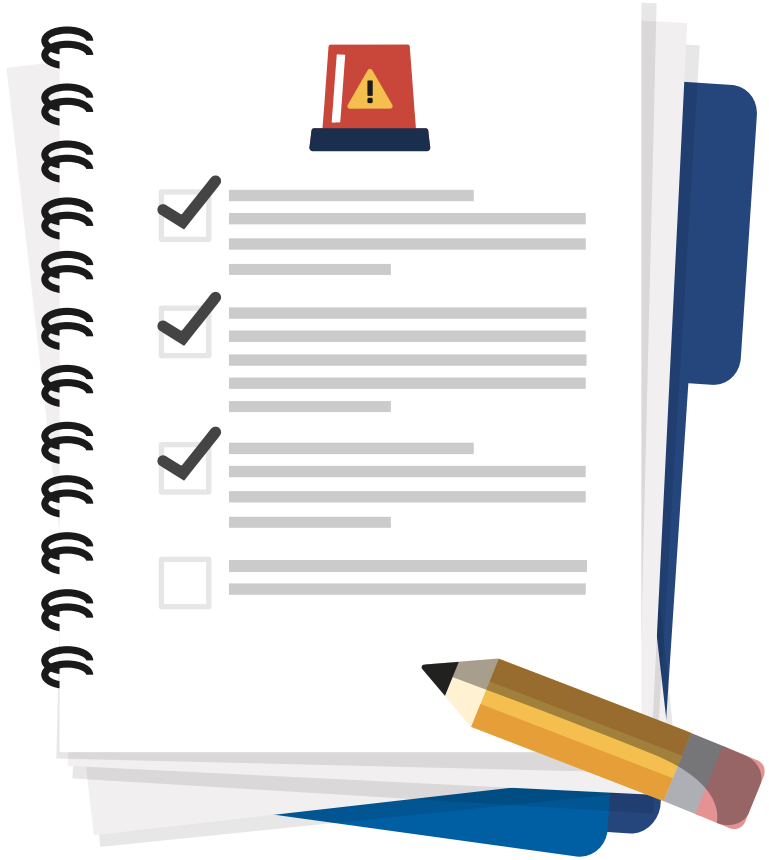
**Emergency planning is a key component of school safety that can include large-scale actions or everyday activities.**

## Recommendations

- Develop a school Emergency Operations Plan and review, evaluate, and update on a regular basis
- Train staff and practice plans through exercises and drills
- Collaborate with local partners including first responders, law enforcement, and public and mental health officials
- Plan for recovery

## Emergency Planning Resources

Visit SchoolSafety.gov/emergency-planning to find resources, guides, and tools.



# Targeted Violence

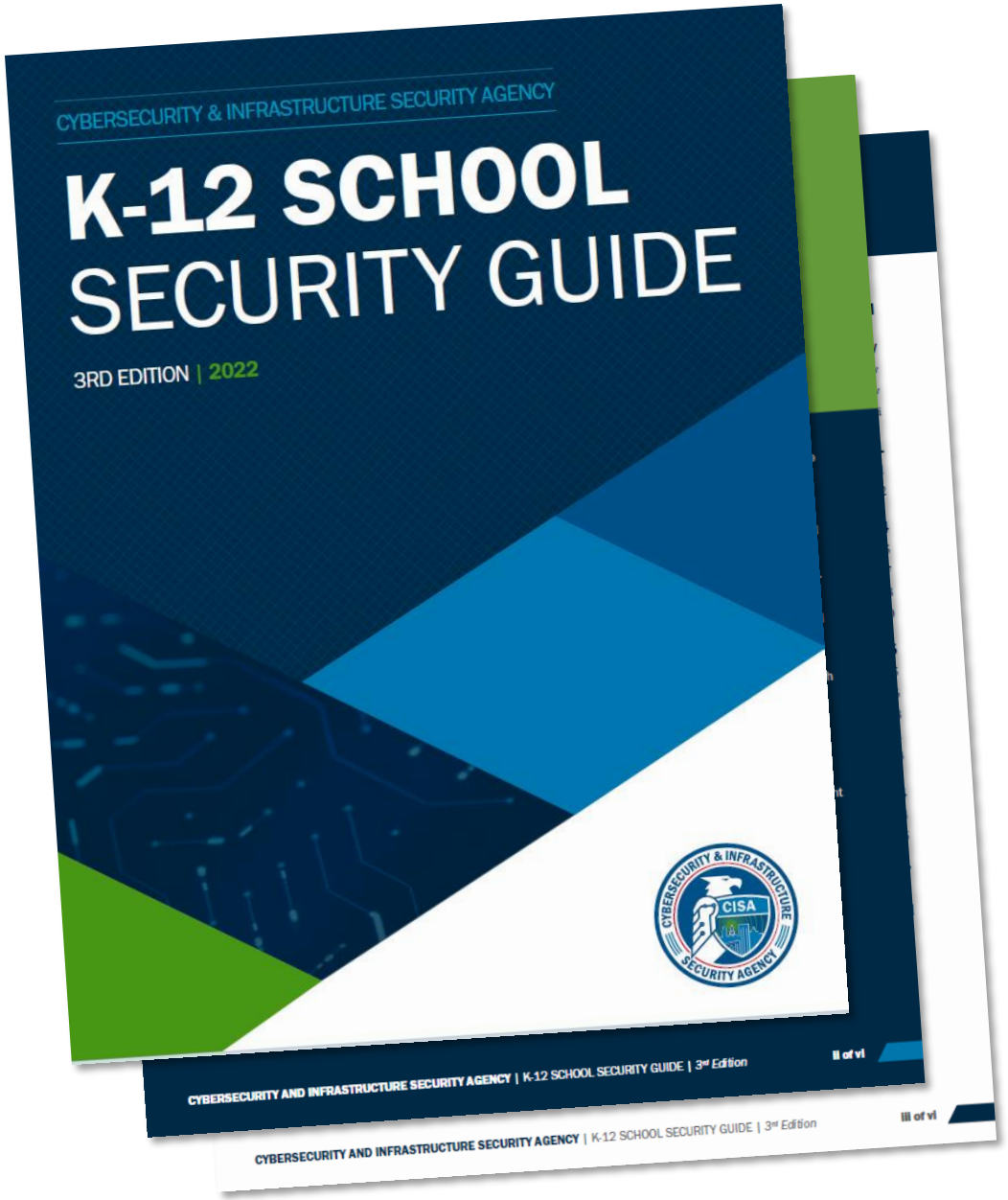
**Targeted violence refers to violence that is premeditated and directed at specific individuals, groups, or locations.**

## Recommendations

- Foster a positive school climate that includes actions to increase school connectedness, address bullying, and provide mental health support
- Intervene to lessen harms and prevent future risk and include school personnel who are trained to recognize and respond to threats of violence
- Implement physical safety and security measures

## Targeted Violence Resources

Visit SchoolSafety.gov/targeted-violence to find resources, guides, and tools.




# Implementing a Systems-Based Approach to School Physical Security

K-12 School Security Guide Product Suite | 2022

# What physical security tools or tactics does your school use?

- **A** **Security Perimeter** (e.g., Fencing & Barriers)
- **B** **Entry Control** (e.g., Monitored Entries, ID Badges, Escort Visitors)
- **C** **Broadcast Systems** (e.g., Loudspeakers)
- **D** **Security Personnel** (e.g., Security Guards)
- **E** **Motion Activated Lighting System**
- **F** **Building Code-Approved Locks**
- **G** **Visual Monitoring** (e.g., Cameras, CCTV)
- **H** **2-Way Communications** (e.g., Alerts between Classrooms & Office)

Visit
**menti.com**

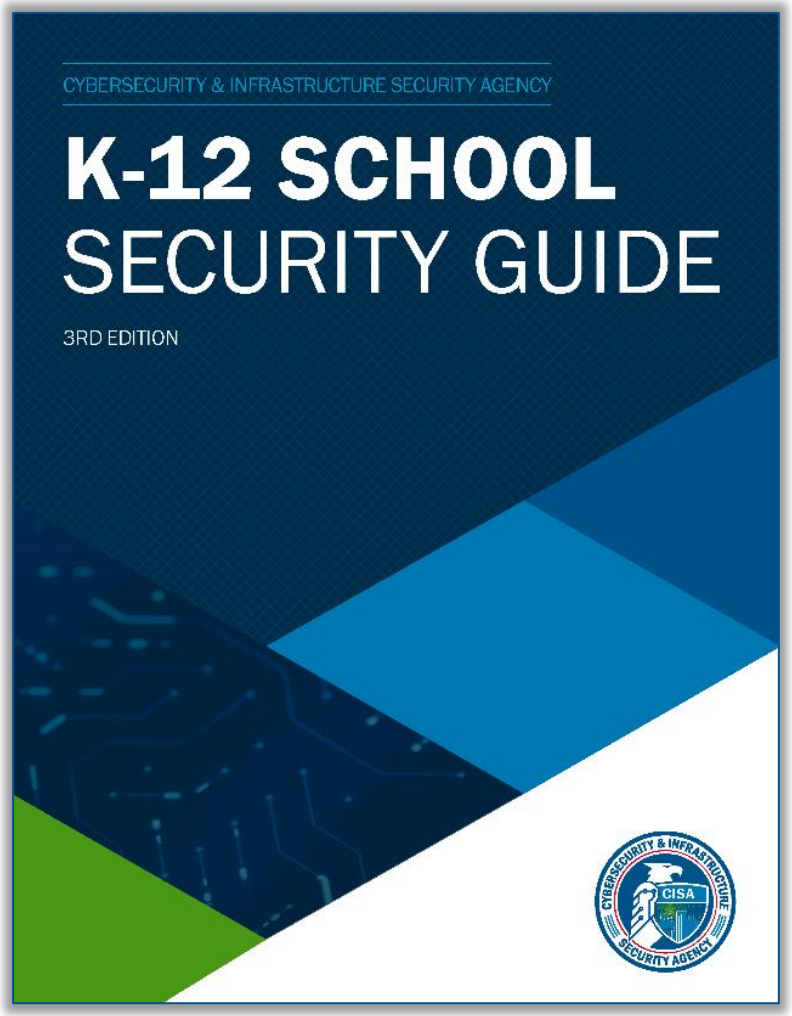
Enter the Code:
**9868 5724**

Or
Scan QR Code

# K-12 School Security Guide

Provides comprehensive doctrine and systems-based methodology to support schools in conducting vulnerability assessments and planning to implement layered physical security elements across K–12 districts and campuses.

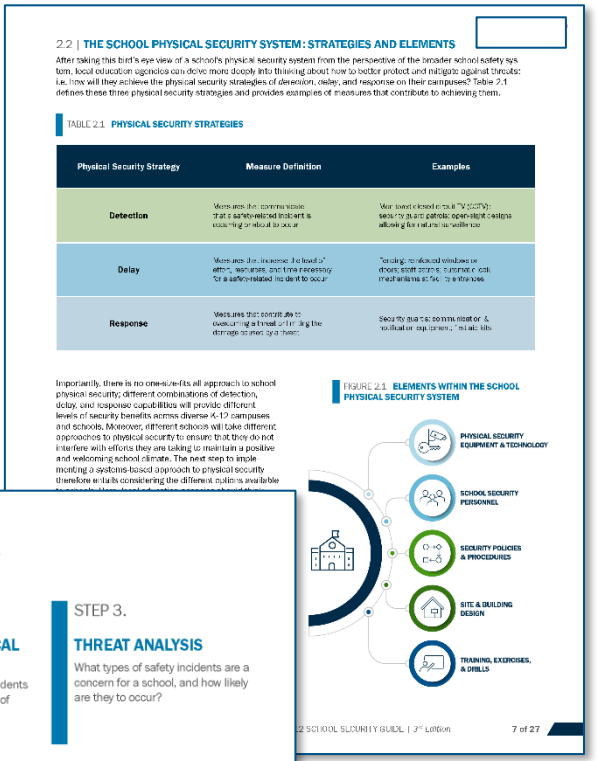
- Enhance understanding of a systems-based approach to layered physical security
- Explain the various elements of a comprehensive school security system
- Describe common challenges schools face in planning or making improvements




**Link:** K-12 School Security Guide Product Suite

# The Systems-Based Approach

Taking a systems-based approach to school physical security means ensuring that various security measures across a school campus work together in an integrated way, and that planning also incorporates the relevant policies and training programs that must also be in place for the entire system to function effectively.


2.2 | THE SCHOOL PHYSICAL SECURITY SYSTEM: STRATEGIES AND ELEMENTS

After taking this bird's eye view of a school's physical security system from the perspective of the broader school safety system, local education agencies can delve more deeply into thinking about how to better protect and mitigate against threats: i.e. how will they achieve the physical security strategies of detection, delay, and response on their campuses? Table 2.1 defines these three physical security strategies and provides examples of measures that contribute to achieving them.

TABLE 2.1 PHYSICAL SECURITY STRATEGIES

| Physical Security Strategy | Measure Definition | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| Detection | Measures that communicate that a safety-related incident is occurring or about to occur | Monitored closed circuit TV (CCTV); security guard patrols; open-sight designs allowing for natural surveillance |
| Delay | Measures that increase the level of effort, resources, and time necessary for a safety-related incident to occur | Tending; reinforced windows or doors; staff controls; automatic cell mechanisms at facility entrances |
| Response | Measures that contribute to overcoming a threat or limiting the damage caused by a threat | Security guards; communication & notification equipment; first aid kits |

Importantly, there is no one-size-fits all approach to school physical security; different combinations of detection, delay, and response capabilities will provide different levels of security benefits across diverse K-12 campuses and schools. Moreover, different schools will take different approaches to physical security to ensure that they do not interfere with efforts they are taking to maintain a positive and welcoming school climate. The next step to implementing a systems-based approach to physical security therefore entails considering the different options available

FIGURE 2.1 ELEMENTS WITHIN THE SCHOOL PHYSICAL SECURITY SYSTEM



2 SCHOOL SECURITY GUIDE | 3rd Edition 7 of 27

## The Systems-Based Approach At-A-Glance:

- Understand the five core elements of school physical security
- Consider a school's specific circumstances to tailor measures
- Identify the various security layers that exist at the school
- Determine security efforts in alignment with P-PM-RR
- Engage in the school security physical planning process

FIGURE 2.4 - STEPS IN THE SCHOOL SECURITY PHYSICAL PLANNING PROCESS

STEP 1.
FORM A PHYSICAL SECURITY PLANNING TEAM
Identify and include relevant school staff and stakeholders, such as community organizations, local law enforcement, and families.

STEP 2.
GATHER RELEVANT LOCAL DATA
Gather local data about safety incidents at schools and the consequences of such events.

STEP 3.
THREAT ANALYSIS
What types of safety incidents are a concern for a school, and how likely are they to occur?

STEP 4.
VULNERABILITY ANALYSIS
What safety and security measures are already in place at the school?

STEP 5.
RISK ANALYSIS
What are the potential consequences of each of the identified safety incidents based on the security measures in place at the school? How do security measures reduce risk? What risk remains?

STEP 6.
CREATE A SECURITY PLAN
Which of those remaining risks are a concern, and what are the most practical and effective additional safety and security measures to address them?

SOURCE: Adapted from Steiner et al., 2021.

# School Security Assessment Tool

## Key Features:

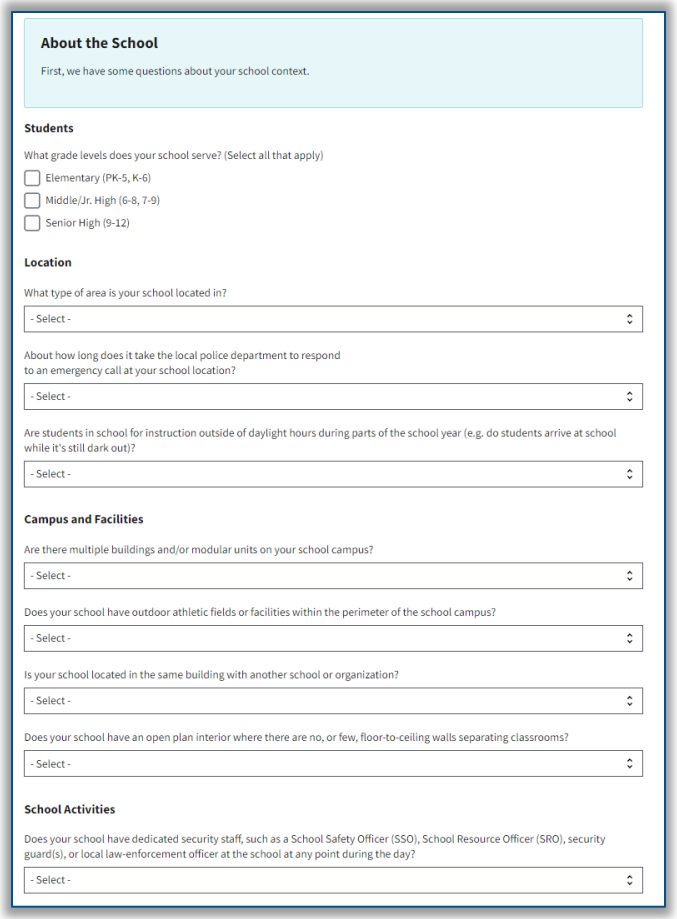
- Highly Portable
- Simple In Language & Design
- Considers Trade-offs
- Enhances Current State
- Prioritized Results
- Recommends Next Actions

**Link:** K-12 School Security Guide Product Suite

# SSAT Step 1 – About the School

The About the School section begins with information specific to your school's attributes, including:

- Grade Levels Served
- Location
- Campus Layout
- Presence of School Security Personnel
- Additional Policies



**About the School**

First, we have some questions about your school context.

**Students**

What grade levels does your school serve? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Elementary (PK-5, K-6)
- ☐ Middle/Jr. High (6-8, 7-9)
- ☐ Senior High (9-12)

**Location**

What type of area is your school located in?

- Select -

About how long does it take the local police department to respond to an emergency call at your school location?

- Select -

Are students in school for instruction outside of daylight hours during parts of the school year (e.g. do students arrive at school while it's still dark out)?

- Select -

**Campus and Facilities**

Are there multiple buildings and/or modular units on your school campus?

- Select -

Does your school have outdoor athletic fields or facilities within the perimeter of the school campus?

- Select -

Is your school located in the same building with another school or organization?

- Select -

Does your school have an open plan interior where there are no, or few, floor-to-ceiling walls separating classrooms?

- Select -

**School Activities**

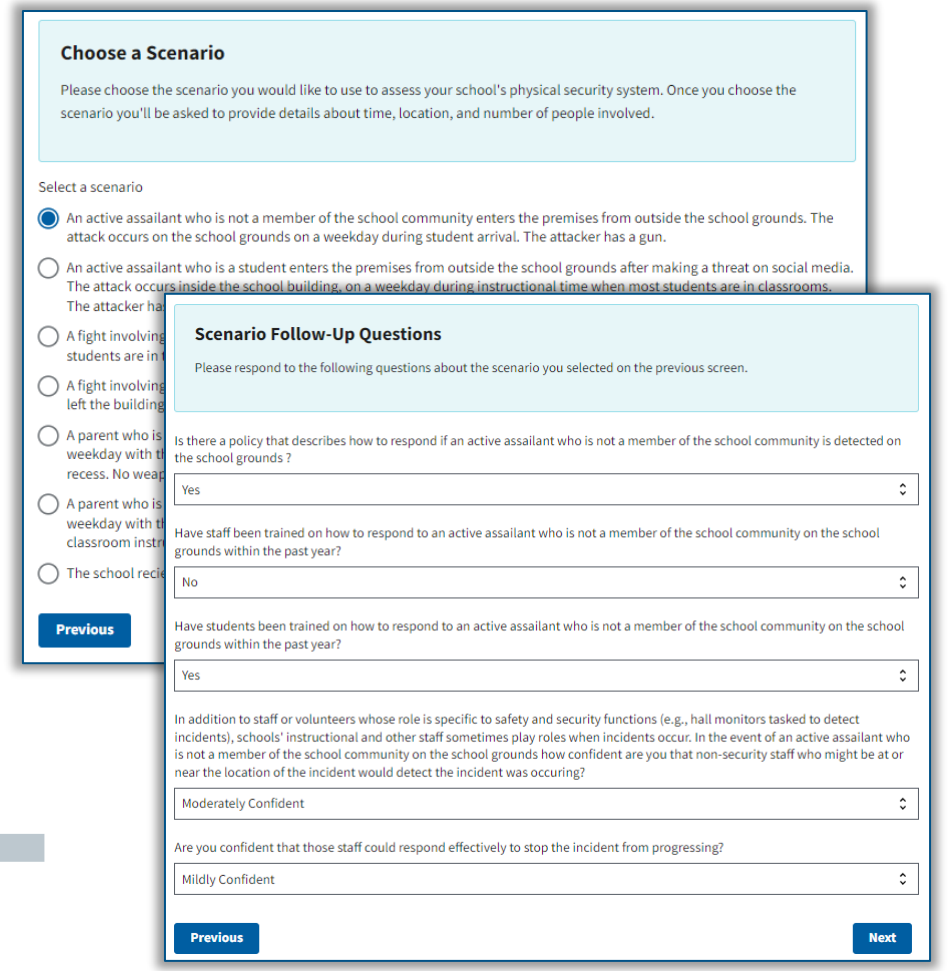
Does your school have dedicated security staff, such as a School Safety Officer (SSO), School Resource Officer (SRO), security guard(s), or local law-enforcement officer at the school at any point during the day?

- Select -

# SSAT Step 2 – Choose a Scenario

The Choose a Scenario section will ask you to choose from a limited number of safety-related incidents and answer follow-up questions relating to that scenario. This helps the tool determine which layers, relevant security measures, and results will be calculated.

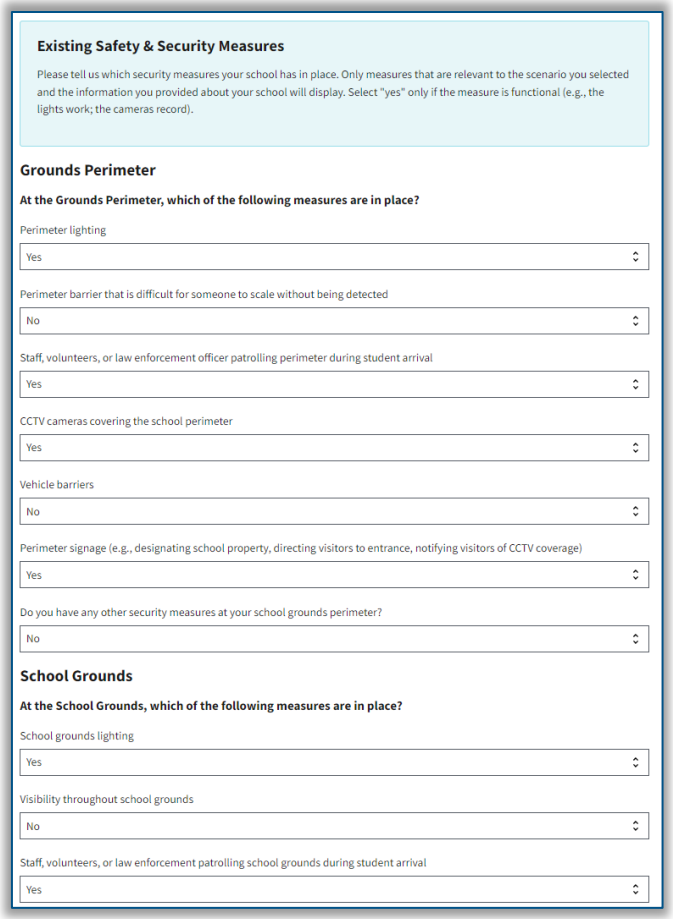
*Note: Users can complete the tool for multiple incidents, although you will need to run the tool separately for each distinct incident.*



# SSAT Step 3 – Existing Measures

The Existing Safety & Security Measures section asks about measures in place across your campus. The questions only ask about measures in place at the physical security layers relevant to the incident selected in “Choose a Scenario.”

*Note: Some scenarios require that you answer questions about measures in place at all four physical security layers. As such, it will take you longer to complete the tool for these scenarios, compared to scenarios that only pertain to one or two physical security layers.*



**Existing Safety & Security Measures**

Please tell us which security measures your school has in place. Only measures that are relevant to the scenario you selected and the information you provided about your school will display. Select "yes" only if the measure is functional (e.g., the lights work; the cameras record).

**Grounds Perimeter**

**At the Grounds Perimeter, which of the following measures are in place?**

Perimeter lighting: Yes

Perimeter barrier that is difficult for someone to scale without being detected: No

Staff, volunteers, or law enforcement officer patrolling perimeter during student arrival: Yes

CCTV cameras covering the school perimeter: Yes

Vehicle barriers: No

Perimeter signage (e.g., designating school property, directing visitors to entrance, notifying visitors of CCTV coverage): Yes

Do you have any other security measures at your school grounds perimeter?: No

**School Grounds**

**At the School Grounds, which of the following measures are in place?**

School grounds lighting: Yes

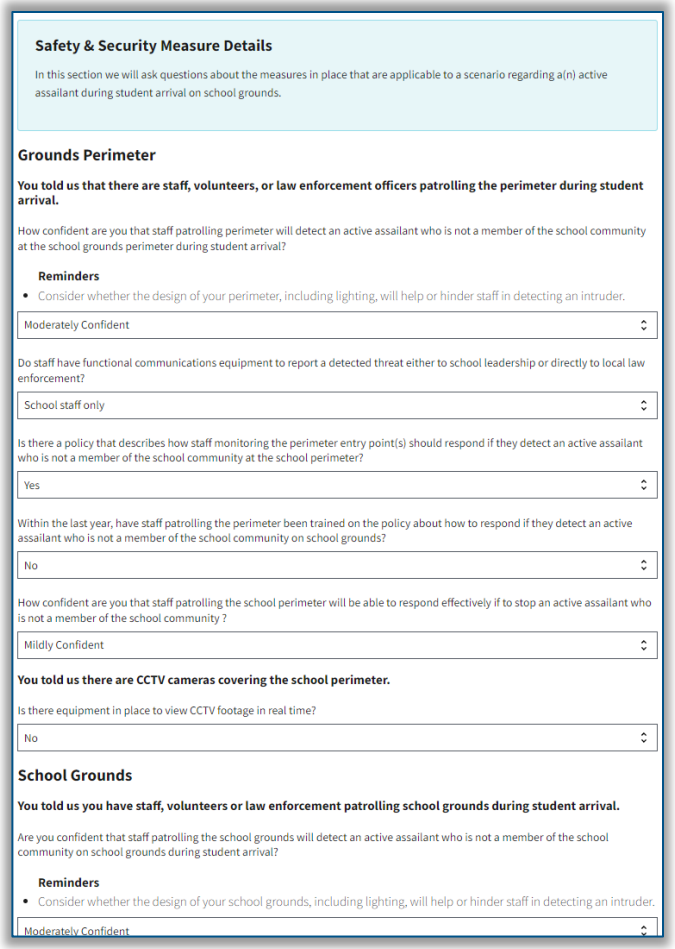
Visibility throughout school grounds: No

Staff, volunteers, or law enforcement patrolling school grounds during student arrival: Yes

# SSAT Step 4 – Measure Details

The Safety & Security Measure Details section ask you a series of follow up questions about the security measures you indicated are in place at your school and includes confidence assessment questions to help identify where additional improvements may be needed.

*As with the prior section, depending on the amount of physical security layers relevant to the chosen scenario, and additional measures you may have selected, this set of questions may take longer to complete.*



**Safety & Security Measure Details**

In this section we will ask questions about the measures in place that are applicable to a scenario regarding a(n) active assailant during student arrival on school grounds.

**Grounds Perimeter**

**You told us that there are staff, volunteers, or law enforcement officers patrolling the perimeter during student arrival.**

How confident are you that staff patrolling perimeter will detect an active assailant who is not a member of the school community at the school grounds perimeter during student arrival?

**Reminders**

- Consider whether the design of your perimeter, including lighting, will help or hinder staff in detecting an intruder.

Moderately Confident

Do staff have functional communications equipment to report a detected threat either to school leadership or directly to local law enforcement?

School staff only

Is there a policy that describes how staff monitoring the perimeter entry point(s) should respond if they detect an active assailant who is not a member of the school community at the school perimeter?

Yes

Within the last year, have staff patrolling the perimeter been trained on the policy about how to respond if they detect an active assailant who is not a member of the school community on school grounds?

No

How confident are you that staff patrolling the school perimeter will be able to respond effectively if to stop an active assailant who is not a member of the school community ?

Mildly Confident

**You told us there are CCTV cameras covering the school perimeter.**

Is there equipment in place to view CCTV footage in real time?

No

**School Grounds**

**You told us you have staff, volunteers or law enforcement patrolling school grounds during student arrival.**

Are you confident that staff patrolling the school grounds will detect an active assailant who is not a member of the school community on school grounds during student arrival?

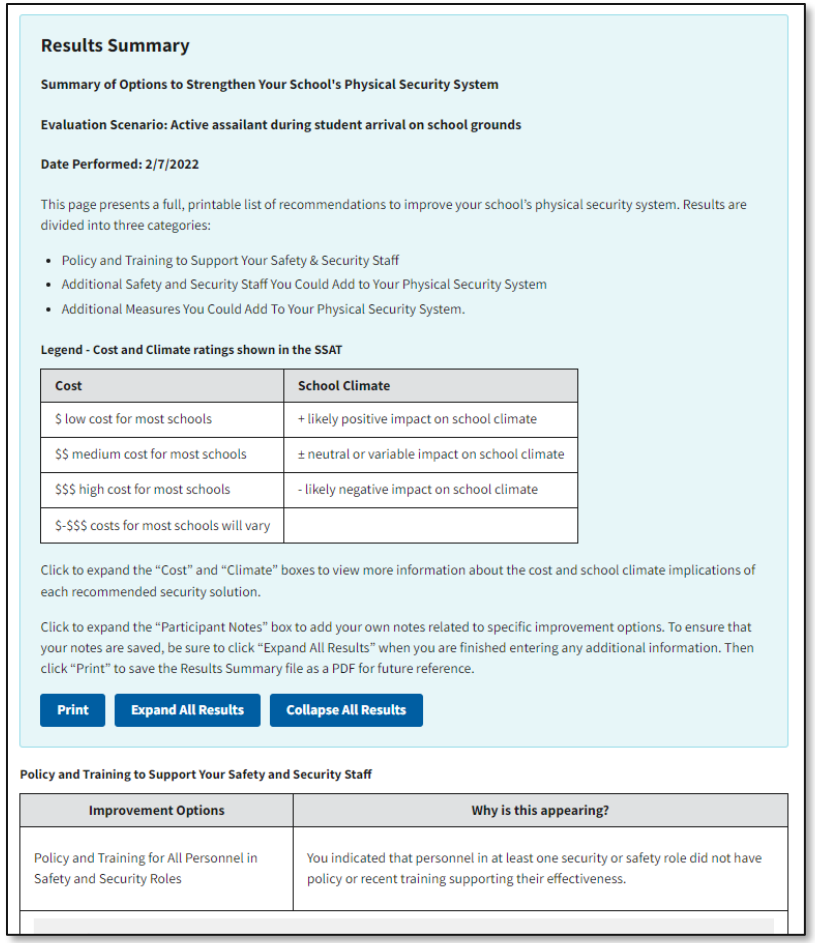
**Reminders**

- Consider whether the design of your school grounds, including lighting, will help or hinder staff in detecting an intruder.

Moderately Confident

# SSAT Step 5 – Results

Once you have answered all the questions, you will be taken to the Results Overview. You will find tailored recommendations with specific actions to improve your school's physical security system



**Results Summary**

**Summary of Options to Strengthen Your School's Physical Security System**

**Evaluation Scenario: Active assailant during student arrival on school grounds**

**Date Performed: 2/7/2022**

This page presents a full, printable list of recommendations to improve your school's physical security system. Results are divided into three categories:

- Policy and Training to Support Your Safety & Security Staff
- Additional Safety and Security Staff You Could Add to Your Physical Security System
- Additional Measures You Could Add To Your Physical Security System.

**Legend - Cost and Climate ratings shown in the SSAT**

| Cost | School Climate |
|---|---|
| $ low cost for most schools | + likely positive impact on school climate |
| $$ medium cost for most schools | ± neutral or variable impact on school climate |
| $$$ high cost for most schools | - likely negative impact on school climate |
| $-$$$ costs for most schools will vary | |

Click to expand the "Cost" and "Climate" boxes to view more information about the cost and school climate implications of each recommended security solution.

Click to expand the "Participant Notes" box to add your own notes related to specific improvement options. To ensure that your notes are saved, be sure to click "Expand All Results" when you are finished entering any additional information. Then click "Print" to save the Results Summary file as a PDF for future reference.

Print | Expand All Results | Collapse All Results

**Policy and Training to Support Your Safety and Security Staff**

| Improvement Options | Why is this appearing? |
|---|---|
| Policy and Training for All Personnel in Safety and Security Roles | You indicated that personnel in at least one security or safety role did not have policy or recent training supporting their effectiveness. |

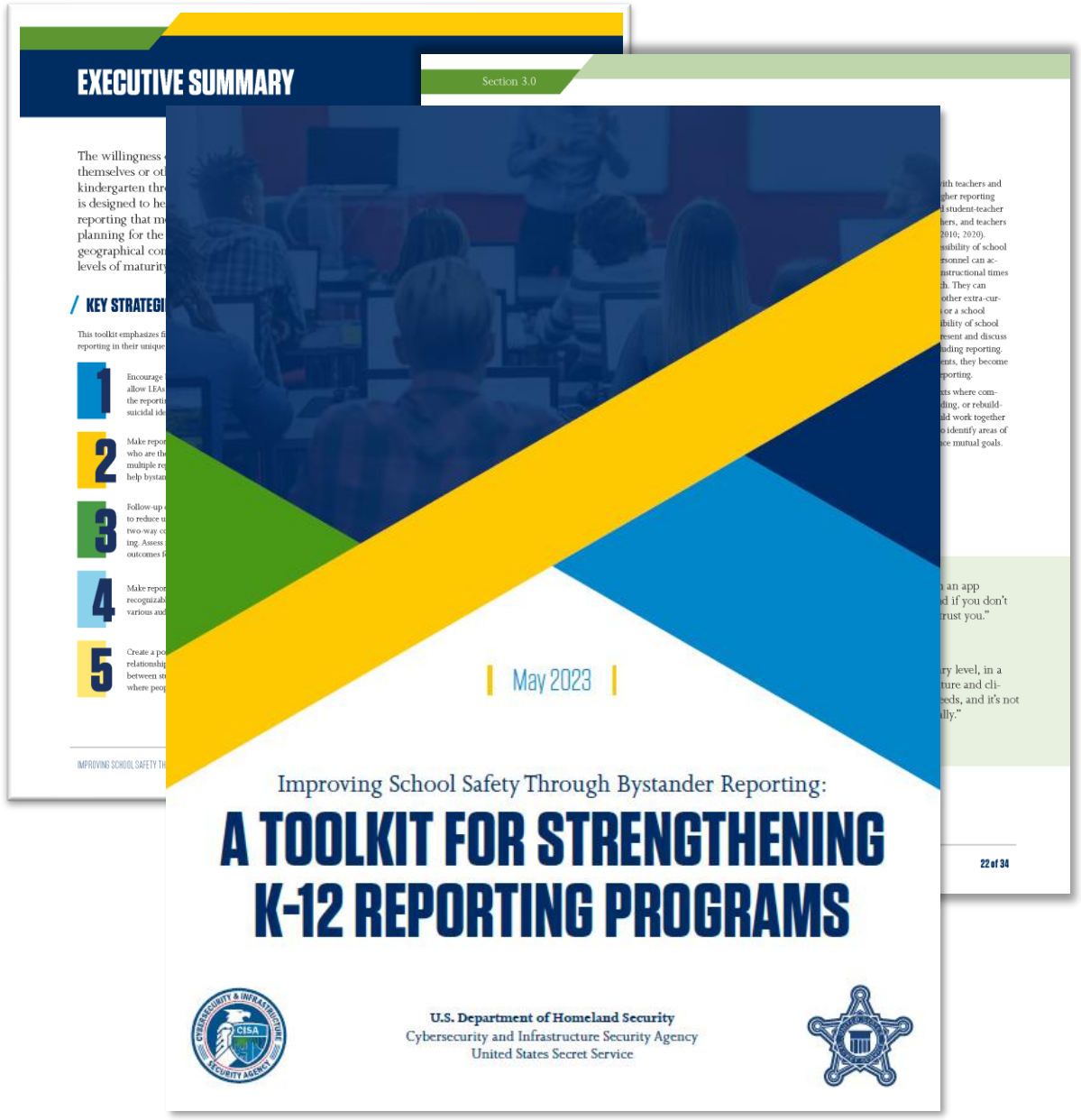
# Product Suite Summary

- K-12 School Security Guide, 3rd Edition
- School Security Assessment Tool (SSAT)
- Video: SSAT “How-To” Video
- Virtual Training: General User
- Virtual Training: Train the Trainer
- SSAT User Guide
- SSAT Technical Appendix

**Link:** K-12 School Security Guide Product Suite

# Improving School Safety Through Bystander Reporting

1st Edition | 2023



# What reporting methods does your school offer?

A Phone Line

B Email

C Online Form

D Mobile App

E In Person

F Other

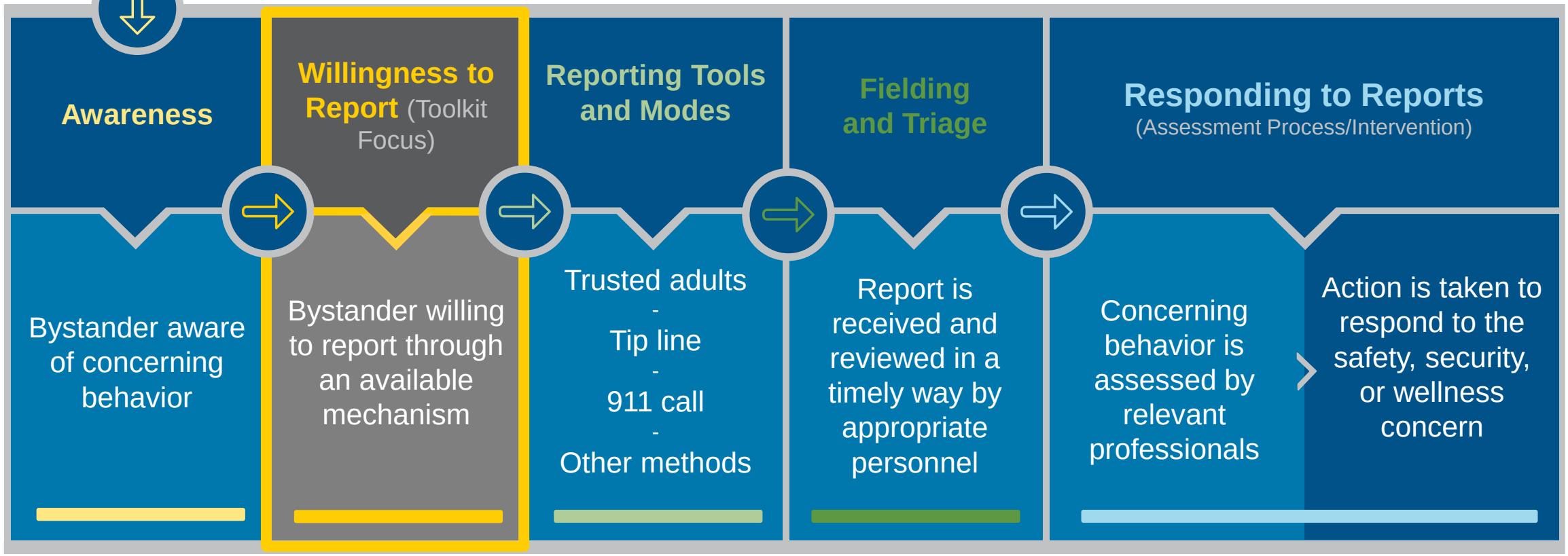
Visit
**menti.com**

Enter the Code:
**9868 5724**

Or
Scan QR Code

# The Reporting & Prevention Continuum

## Individual Behaviors Causing Concern for Safety, Security, or Wellness




**Link:** [K-12 Bystander Reporting Toolkit]

# CISA-NTAC K-12 Bystander Reporting Toolkit Strategies

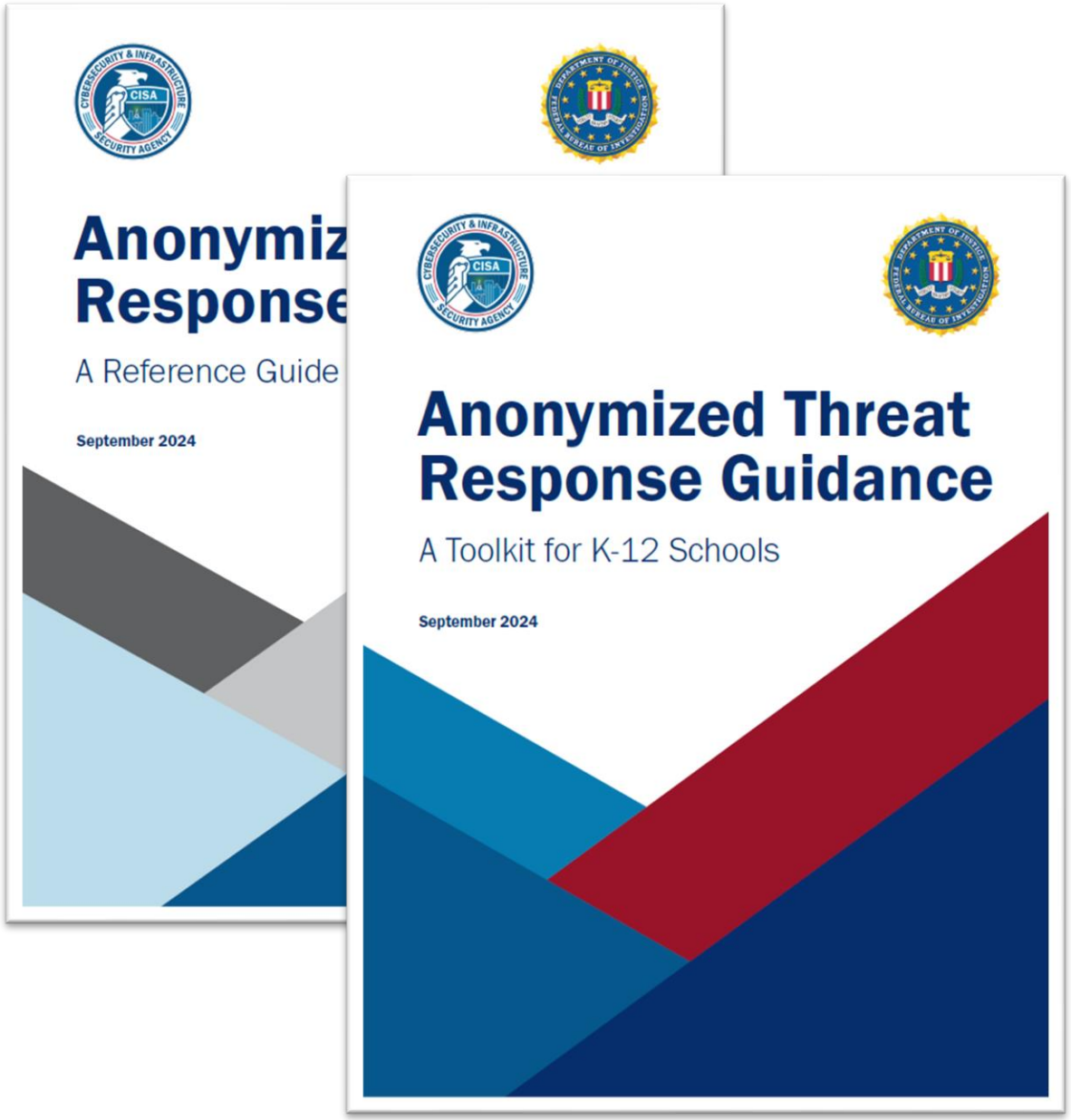
## This toolkit emphasizes five key strategies to encourage and support K-12 reporting systems:

1. Encourage bystanders to report concerns for the wellness and safety of themselves or others.
2. Make reporting accessible and safe for the reporting community.
3. Follow-up on reports and be transparent about the actions taken in response to reported concerns.
4. Make reporting a part of daily school life.
5. Create a positive climate where reporting is valued and respected.

# K-12 Anonymized Threat Response Guidance

Toolkit & Reference Guide

**September 2024**



# K-12 Anonymized Threat Response Guidance

**This toolkit helps support the identification and implementation of scalable response solutions to threats originating on, or submitted via, anonymized platforms and mediums.**

## The toolkit features six sections that:

- Provide an overview of anonymous threat trends that target K-12 schools
- Discuss first steps and other response actions schools can immediately take
- Outline initiatives that schools can consider to help prevent and deter threat-making
- Offer school and partner actions to determine scalable solutions to received threats
- Describe key partners in addressing anonymous threats against K-12 schools
- Deliver worksheets and other resources to help schools consider context-specific needs

# What is an Anonymized Threat?

**Anonymous threats can be delivered via a multitude of different ways.**

**Across the various modes of delivery, the identity of the individual making the threat is not immediately discernable.**

**Anonymous threats are different from threats made by known individuals.**

**35%**

of K-12 teachers reported their school had been disrupted by social media threats during the 2021-2022 school year

**60%**

increase in anonymized threats reported from 2021 to 2022

**95%**

of youth ages 13-17 report using at least one social media platform

# Key Strategies to Address Anonymized Threats

**The toolkit emphasizes the following key strategies to address anonymized threats:**

1. Build awareness about reporting to detect threats early and deter future threats.
2. Develop a partnership structure.
3. Consider the inclusion of a multidisciplinary threat assessment team.
4. Balance initial steps to ensure the campus is safe.
5. Triage and determine the level of concern.
6. Enhance school preparedness to address future threats.

## Executive Summary

According to Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) data, schools were the target of more than 6,000 threats in 2022, most of which were anonymous and posted to social media (Haskell, 2023). These threats are taxing school and law enforcement resources, contributing to losses in instruction time and traumatizing school communities. The *CISA Anonymized Threat Response Guidance: A Toolkit for K-12 Schools* is designed to help local education agencies and their law enforcement and community partners create tailored approaches to addressing anonymous threats from assessment to response. This guide is intended to assist the range of kindergarten through grade 12 (K-12) schools across the United States and is applicable to schools across diverse geographical settings, student populations, and levels of maturity in emergency operations planning.

### Key Strategies to Address Anonymized Threats

**Build awareness about reporting to detect threats early and deter future threats.**

Bystander reporting is a critical violence prevention tool for K-12 schools (see e.g. CISA and NTAC, 2023; Moore et al., 2023; NTAC, 2021). Like threats or comments made by known individuals (sometimes termed "leakage" in threat assessment protocols), efforts to detect anonymized threats against schools before they can spread should focus heavily on building awareness about reporting. Encourage community members to "Report, Don't Repost" threats they see online, since stopping the further dissemination of a threat both aids investigation and limits the potential impact of threats that, while alarming, are not intended to be followed through. Efforts to educate parents and others across the school community about youth social media use are also critical to spreading the word about what constitutes a threat and the damage threats can do to a school community. Be clear about what the consequences are for making threats, even if they are meant to be jokes. Finally, threats made by students are often indicators of underlying problems and akin to cries for help. Early intervention by mental health and other professionals is often better than intervention after the fact.

**Develop a partnership structure that will help address anonymized threats.**

Schools work with several different partners both inside and outside the immediate school community to address anonymized and other threats. In addition to school administrators, intelligence organizations, such as fusion centers or the FBI, and school-based or school-knowledgeable law enforcement personnel, such as school resource officers (SROs), will play a key role in assessing threats and deciding on appropriate response actions. Mental health and other threat assessment professionals will provide key resources to schools addressing threat situations, including in the aftermath of threats, to ensure that the mental health, emotional and other needs of the community are met.

**Consider the inclusion of a multidisciplinary threat assessment team when addressing anonymous threats, and utilize their expertise if the subject who made the threat becomes known.**

Multidisciplinary threat assessment teams can help identify the level of concern posed by an individual who made a threat or exhibited concerning behavior and can decide on the appropriate supports and interventions for individuals identified as "at risk of doing harm." At a minimum, these teams should include a school administrator, a school-based law enforcement representative, and a school counselor and/or other mental health professional with the option of adding individuals who can further help assess the situation and contribute to developing the right intervention plan. While the utility of a multidisciplinary threat assessment team may be limited prior to knowing the identity of the threat's source, awareness of an anonymous threat could identify a link to previous incidents, thereby aiding the response, and expediting the team's response if an individual is eventually identified.

**Response coordinators should balance initial steps to ensure the campus is safe.**

Schools that are targets of anonymized threats must treat each one as initially credible. If a school is the target of a threat, determining which assets need to be on-scene to keep the campus and school community safe is a critical first step. Because certain response actions, such as full lockdowns or an increased police presence, can be traumatizing for some students, schools should consider the intensity and overtness of their response. Determine how to balance the initial response and leave open the potential to scale up rapidly as necessary. Be prepared to announce to the community whether the decision is made to lock down, secure campus or close school. Ensure that school personnel coordinate with local law enforcement to deliver uniform messages about a threat situation and provide accurate, up-to-date information to the broader school community.

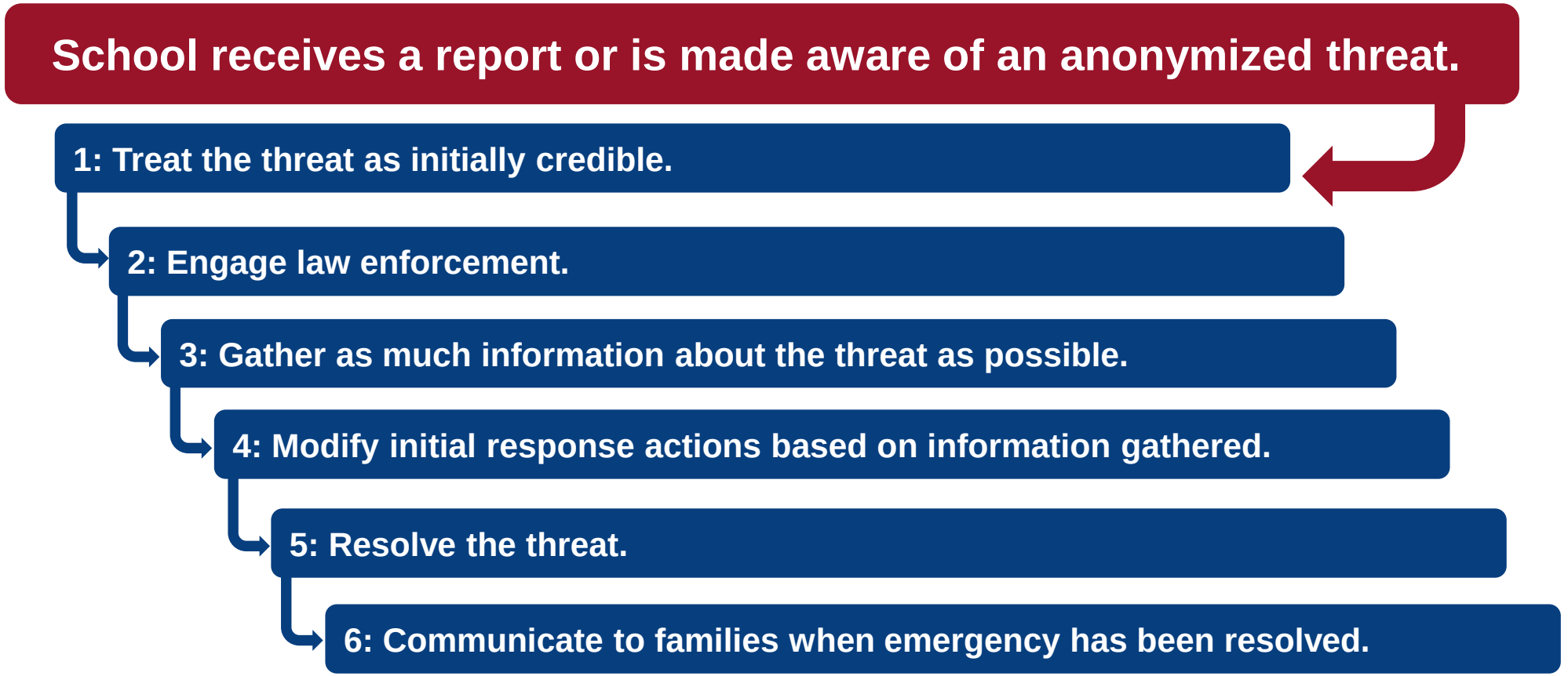
**Triage and determine the level of concern a threat poses.**

The first step in triaging anonymous threats is to engage a law enforcement partner whose expertise is critical to managing threat situations and deciding when it is okay or necessary to scale response actions up or down. First, consider key background and contextual information about a threat. Then, move on to identify any discernable patterns that might elevate or decrease the level of concern posed by the threat. Finally, identify any signs of the threat's imminence that might call for a rapid response reaction to keep the community safe.

**Putting it all together: Enhance school preparedness to address future threats.**

Every school and school district can take steps throughout the school year to better prepare for threat situations. Successful response during an emergency begins with ongoing preparedness and prevention efforts outside of emergencies. Establish a response protocol that addresses threat situations, and conduct developmentally and age-appropriate drills and training exercises to help prepare for responding to threats. Establish protocols for communicating with families, and make sure the resources are in place to address the impacts of a threat.

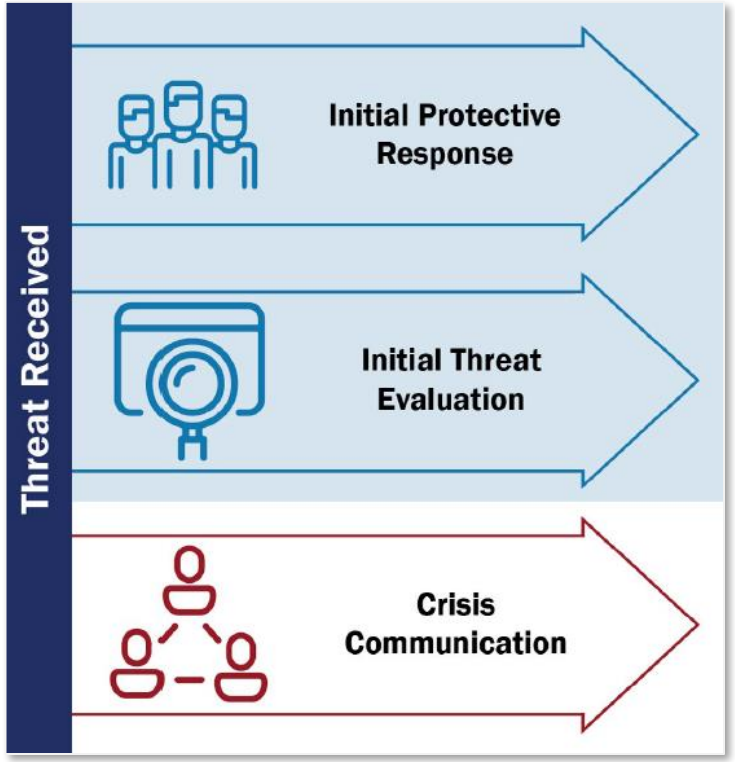
# Receiving & Assessing Anonymized Threats



# Initial Response Actions

**The toolkit describes how a phased approach to response by law enforcement and other security personnel can reduce trauma and disruption to the academic mission.**

- **Initial Protective Response**
  - Goal is to minimize disruption
  - Response options vary largely in two ways:
    - Low Intensity vs. High Intensity
    - Low Visibility vs. Overt Responses
- **Initial Threat Evaluation**
  - Consider background and contextual information
  - Detect patterns
  - Identify signs of imminence
- **Crisis Communications**



# Balancing Response Actions

**The toolkit expands on how K-12 schools can balance response actions for complex and uncertain threats, as well as use specific protocols to organize and escalate responses to threats.**

Certain factors can increase or decrease the **level of concern** a threat poses. Examples include:

| Factors Decreasing Level of Concern | Factors with Unclear Impact on Level of Concern | Factors Increasing Level of Concern |
|---|---|---|
| • Threat appears on social media platform not commonly used by youth<br>• Immature language or non-native English<br>• Multiple schools receive same or similar threat | • Specific or personalized language easily available to the public<br>• Proximity in time to other violent incidents | • Broad transmission to many online followers<br>• Last resort language<br>• Focus on attack outcomes (e.g. casualty count)<br>• Awareness of legal implications of threat |

# Preparing for Anonymized Threats

**The toolkit contains resources for developing emergency operations plans, establishing threat response protocols, and facilitating training and drills to help K-12 schools prepare for anonymized threats.**

## What To Do Before a Threat

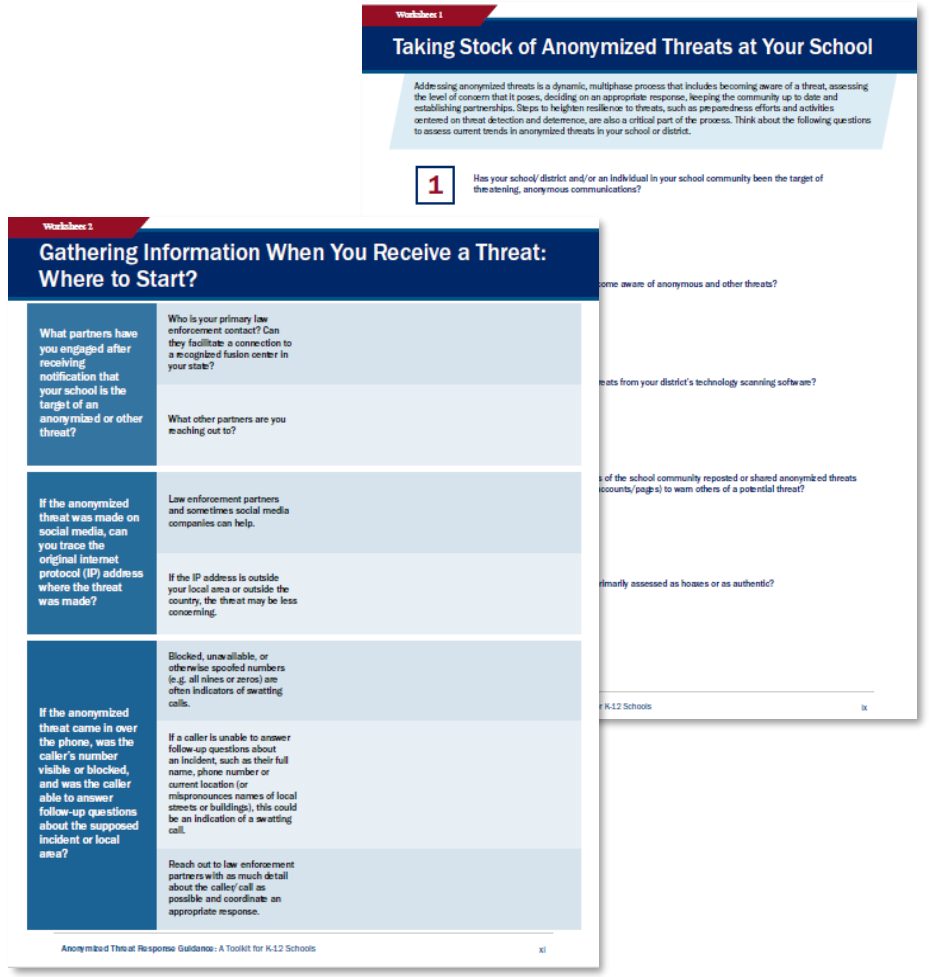
- Build and maintain relationships with local first responders through regular communications and training.
- Develop an emergency operations plan (EOP) that includes an annex specifically for anonymized threat situations.
- Conduct age- and developmentally-appropriate drills.
- Create and maintain protocols for communicating with families during emergencies.
- Establish a multidisciplinary threat assessment team that meets regularly to assess and manage threats.
- Maintain access to resources to support the mental well-being of the school community.

## What To Do After a Threat

- Provide access to resources to address trauma and stress.
- Plan an after-action review of the emergency.
- Continue to communicate about ongoing efforts around safety and recovery.

# Worksheets

- ***Worksheet: Taking Stock of Anonymized Threats at Your School***
  - Provides a set of questions to assess trends on social media-based and other types of anonymous threats and current detection and deterrence practices.
- ***Worksheet: Gathering Information When You Receive a Threat: Where to Start?***
  - Provides a set of questions to collect relevant information and outline actions to support quick response.



Worksheet 1

Taking Stock of Anonymized Threats at Your School

Addressing anonymized threats is a dynamic, multiphase process that includes becoming aware of a threat, assessing the level of concern that it poses, deciding on an appropriate response, keeping the community up to date and establishing partnerships. Steps to heighten resilience to threats, such as preparedness efforts and activities centered on threat detection and deterrence, are also a critical part of the process. Think about the following questions to assess current trends in anonymized threats in your school or district.

1 Has your school/district and/or an individual in your school community been the target of threatening, anonymous communications?

Worksheet 1

Gathering Information When You Receive a Threat: Where to Start?

| | |
|---|---|
| What partners have you engaged after receiving notification that your school is the target of an anonymized or other threat? | Who is your primary law enforcement contact? Can they facilitate a connection to a recognized fusion center in your state? |
| | What other partners are you reaching out to? |
| If the anonymized threat was made on social media, can you trace the original internet protocol (IP) address where the threat was made? | Law enforcement partners and sometimes social media companies can help. |
| | If the IP address is outside your local area or outside the country, the threat may be less concerning. |
| If the anonymized threat came in over the phone, was the caller's number visible or blocked, and was the caller able to answer follow-up questions about the supposed incident or local area? | Blocked, unavailable, or otherwise spoofed numbers (e.g. all nines or zeros) are often indicators of swatting calls. |
| | If a caller is unable to answer follow-up questions about an incident, such as their full name, phone number or current location (or mispronounces names of local streets or buildings), this could be an indication of a swatting call. |
| | Reach out to law enforcement partners with as much detail about the caller/call as possible and coordinate an appropriate response. |

Anonymized Threat Response Guidance: A Toolkit for K-12 Schools xi

# SchoolSafety.gov

Federal and State Resources, Guidance, and Tools to Create Safe School Environments

# SchoolSafety.Gov

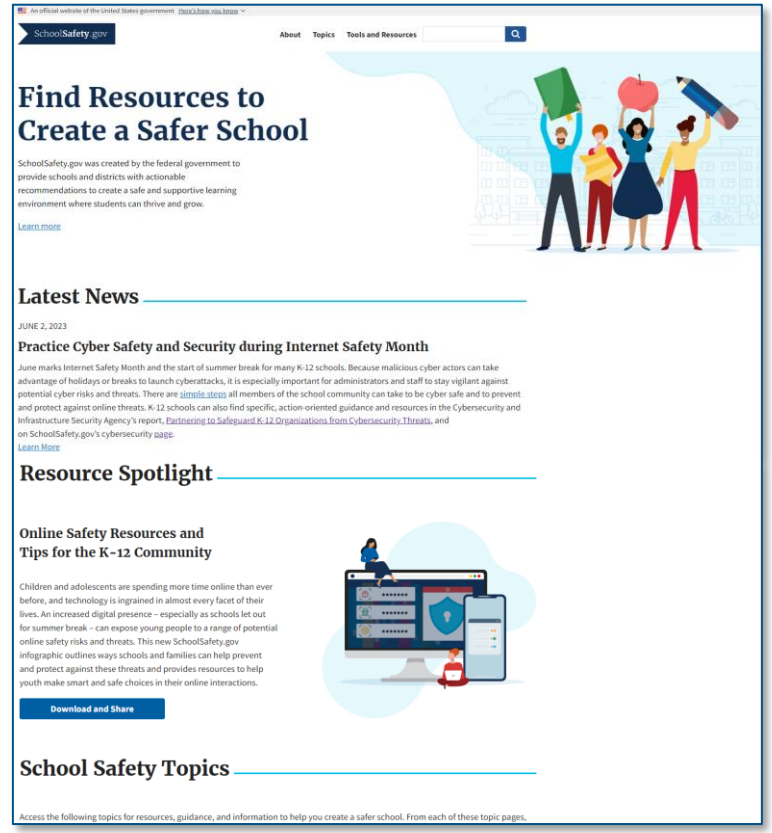
SchoolSafety.gov

## Safety Topics

- Bullying & Cyberbullying
- Child Exploitation
- Cybersecurity
- Emergency Planning
- Infectious Diseases & Public Health
- Mental Health
- School Climate
- Targeted Violence
- Threat Assessment & Reporting

## Key Tools & Features

- Safety Readiness Tool
- State Search Tool
- Resource Library
- Calendar of Events
- Grants Finder Tool
- School Safety Community Bulletin
- Communications Center




**Link:** SchoolSafety.gov

# Grants Finder Tool



**Helps members of the K-12 school community more easily find, apply for, and ultimately receive school safety-related Federal funding.**

- Safety Topic
- Release & Deadlines
- Award Amount
- Level of Effort Needed
- Type of Grant
- Funding Agency
- Applicable Audiences
- Alerts & Notifications

**Link:** Grants Finder Tool

# State Search Tool

SchoolSafety.gov

**Locate and access state-specific school safety resources, programs, contacts, and opportunities.**

- School Safety Programs
- Events & Trainings
- State Funding Opportunities
- State Resources
- State & Federal Contacts

**Link:** State Search Tool

## For Additional SchoolSafety.gov News, Resources and Events:

Follow **@SchoolSafetygov**

**Subscribe** to our list-serve

# Question & Answer

Thank You

CYBERSECURITY & INFRASTRUCTURE
SECURITY AGENCY
CISA

# Resources & References

## SchoolSafety.gov

- Bystander Reporting Toolkit
- ATRG
- Grants Finder Tool
- Safety Readiness Tool
- State Information Sharing Tool
- Resource Library
- Calendar of Events
- Informational Webinar Series
- Monthly School Safety Community Bulletin
- Communication Center

## CISA

- K-12 School Security Guide Product Suite
- National Summit on K-12 School Safety and Security
- Active Shooter Preparedness: School Security and Resilience
- Protecting our Future: Partnering to Safeguard K-12 Organizations from Cybersecurity Threats
- Partnering to Safeguard K-12 Toolkit
- Bombing Prevention Resources and Trainings
- Securing Mass Gathering Resources
- De-Escalation of Violence Resources
- Tabletop Exercise Packages
- Protective Security Advisors (PSA)

## USSS NTAC

- Mass Attacks in Public Spaces: 2016-2020
- Averting Targeted School Violence: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Plots Against Schools
- Protecting America's Schools: A U.S. Secret Service Analysis of Targeted School Violence
- Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence

## DHS

- DHS Threat Assessment
- CP3: Prevention Resources
- If You See Something, Say Something